

Featuring
in this
issue...

KIT WEST in **THE DEVIL'S
SCOURGE**

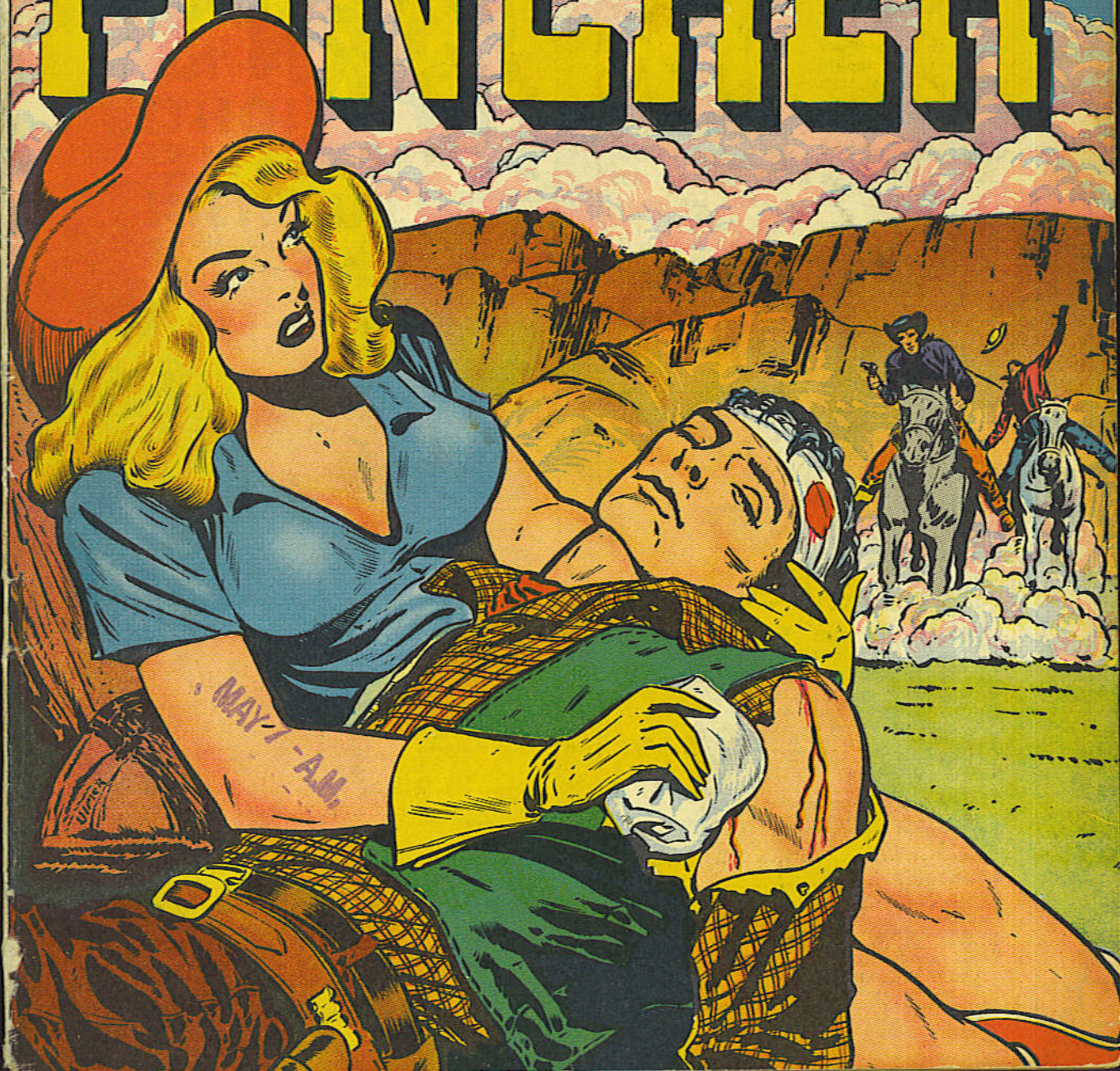


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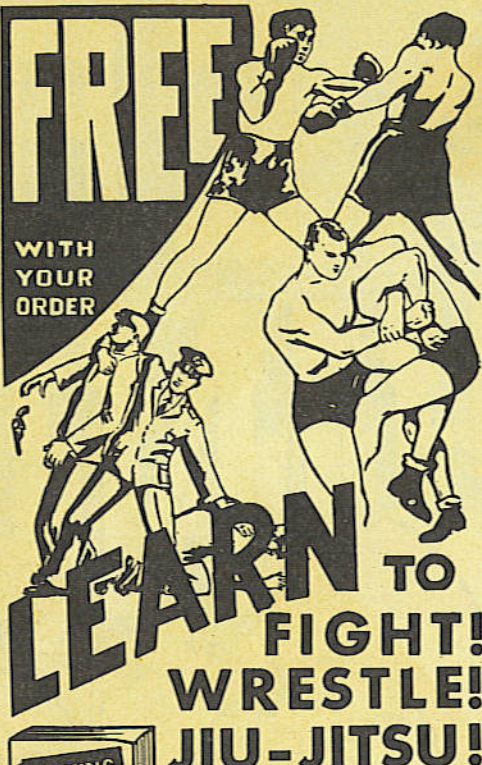
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KIT WEST

in the "DEVIL'S SCOURGE"

MANY MEN HAVE STOOD UP TIME AND AGAIN TO CONQUER MANY FORMS OF TERROR. BUT WHAT MORTAL CAN BEHOLD THE HORROR OF THE SUPERNATURAL, THE APPARITION OF EVIL INCARNATE WITHOUT HEARING THE CLAP OF DOOM IN HIS EARS? IT WAS WITH THIS PETRIFIED FEELING THAT **KIT WEST**, QUEEN OF PIONEERS, DID BATTLE WITH THE DEVIL HIMSELF, WITH THE FATE OF THE FRONTIER LYING IN THE BALANCE!



IN THAT DENSE WILDERNESS
LATER KNOWN AS MISSOURI, A
SLIM, BEAUTEOUS GIRL BENDS
CURIOUSLY OVER THE SOD...



INDIANS! AT LEAST
A **SCORE** OF THEM
PASSED THIS WAY-
NOT FIVE HOURS
AGO!

TO LOBONDO AND HIS
BRAVES **DARE** TAKE
THE WARPETH AFTER
THE DEFEAT THEY
SUFFERED LAST YEAR
AT FORT YORK! I
THOUGHT WE'D DIS-
COURAGED HIS BLOOD-
THIRSTY MOHALIS FOR
GOOD!



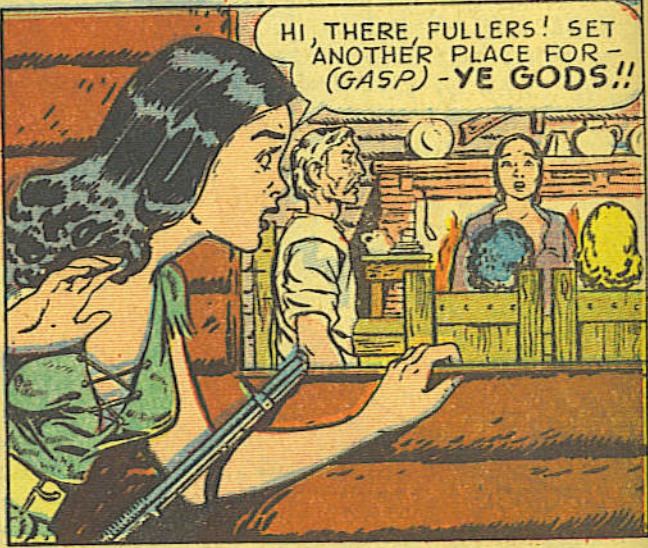
THEY PASSED HERE,
ALL RIGHT... CAMP
FIRE... DEER BONES,
YET NO SIGN OF A
SHOE PRINT - 50 NO
CAPTIVES!



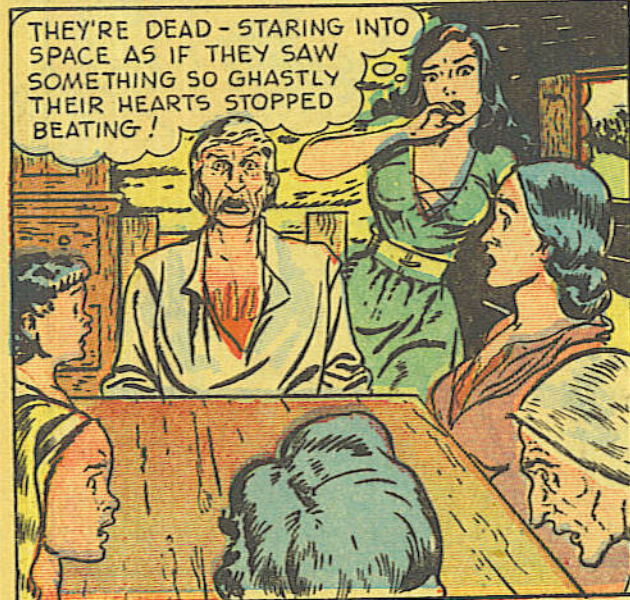
HOURS LATER .. A CLEARING...



I WAS RIGHT! THERE'S THE
FULLER CABIN - NO BURNING
BUILDING - NO SCALPED
BODIES - EVERYBODY
INDOORS FOR SUPPER.
I'LL SNEAK UP AND
SURPRISE THEM!



HI, THERE, FULLERS! SET
ANOTHER PLACE FOR -
(GASP) - **YE GODS!!**

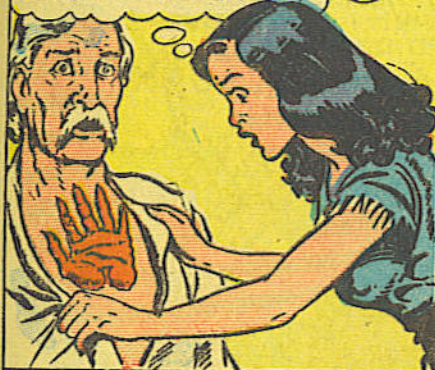


THEY'RE DEAD - STARING INTO
SPACE AS IF THEY SAW
SOMETHING SO GHASTLY
THEIR HEARTS STOPPED
BEATING!



THEY COULDN'T HAVE BEEN
SURPRISED AT SUPPER - NOTHING
COOKING IN THE POT - - BREAK-
FAST DISHES STILL UNWASHED -
THAT'S NOT LIKE MRS. FULLER
(SNIFF) - THERE'S A FUNNY
ODOR HERE.. LIKE (SNIFF)...

GOOD GRACIOUS! A **HAND PRINT** ON MR. FULLER'S CHEST! HORNY, RED -- BURNING THE FLESH IT TOUCHED!



THEY **ALL** HAVE THE SAME HAND PRINTS! WHAT GRISLY JOKE IS THIS? WHO DROPPED UP THESE BODIES? THIS ISN'T MURDER, INJUN STYLE -- IT'S -- IT'S WEIRD!



EARLY NEXT MORNING...

I HATE TELLING THEM ABOUT THE FULLERS -- THE WAY THEY DIED! FRONTIER FOLK ARE SO SUPERSTITIOUS! STILL, I MUST GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS MYSTERY.

STAND OFF, STRANGER -- IDENTIFY YOURSELF!



KIT WEST! OPEN YOUR GATES! I HAVE BAD NEWS!



THE FULLERS -- FROM GRANDMA TO THE BABIES -- ALL DEAD!!

WAS THERE A SMELL OF BRIMSTONE... HORNY, RED HANDPRINTS AN' A LOOK ON THEIR FACES AS IF THEY SAW BEELZEBUB HIMSELF?

W-WHY-- **YES!** HOW DID YOU KNOW?

IT'S BEEN GOIN' ON FOR MONTHS -- MORE'N A DOZEN FAMILIES FOUND LIKE THAT! THE SETTLERS ARE SCART TO DEATH! THEY'RE LEAVIN' IN **DROVES!**



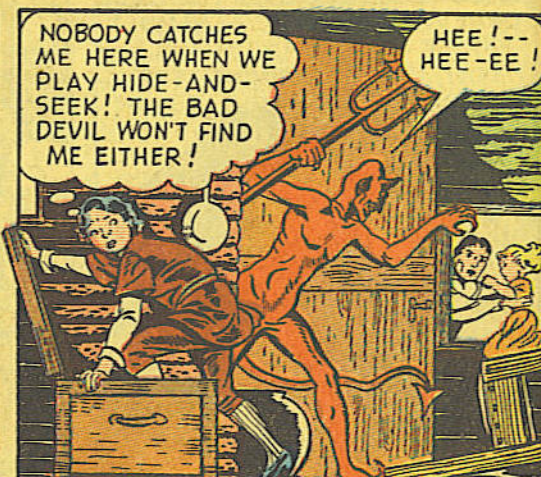
MEANWHILE, AT A CABIN FOUR MILES AWAY...





WICKED MORTALS, PREPARE TO DIE! THE DEVIL HAS COME FOR YOUR SOULS! HEE! HEE! HEE!

CHILDREN-- R-RUN! RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!



NOBODY CATCHES ME HERE WHEN WE PLAY HIDE-AND-SEEK! THE BAD DEVIL WON'T FIND ME EITHER!

HEE!--- HEE-EE!



AN HOUR LATER

W-WHY, THE DEVIL'S **GONE!** AND EVERYBODY'S HERE-- MA, PA, WILLIE, JO-ANN ... SITTING AROUND THE TABLE FOR SUPPER ...



SHE LOOKS SO FUNNY...THEY ALL DO-- THEY'RE **DEAD!** THE D-DEVIL KILLED THEM! (SOB!)



SO NONE OF YOU KNOWS WHY OR HOW THESE EERIE MURDERS HAPPENED?

OPEN THE GATE (SOB!) PLEASE!

IT'S LITTLE JOHNNY TERRIGAN!

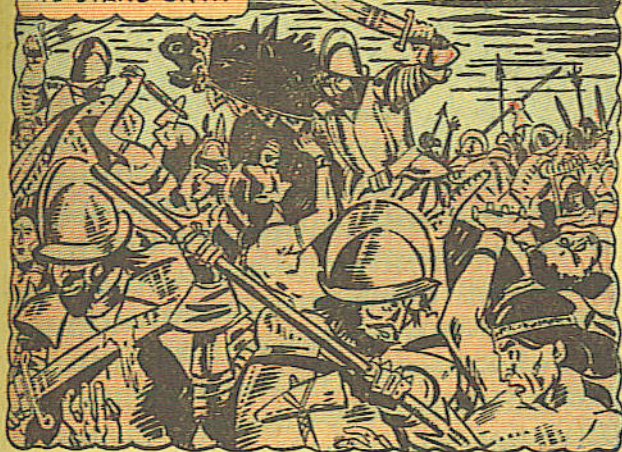


THE DEVIL CAME...KILLED EVERYONE BUT ME! I HID IN A CHEST...THE DEVIL BURNED EVERYBODY WITH HIS HANDS!

DEVIL--BOSH! IT'S AN INJUN EVIL SPIRIT, I TELL YOU--TAKES THE SHAPE OF THE DEVIL--TO DRIVE US OFF THIS CURSED LAND!

...AYE, A DEADLY CURSE THE OLD MOHALI MEDICINE MEN PUT ON IT EVER SINCE SPANISH CONQUISTADORS SLAUGHTERED THE MOHALI BRAVES LIKE MICE!

...200 YEARS AGO, DON FORTUNATO HUERTA, A CRUEL CONQUISTADOR, ALMOST WIPED OUT THE MOHALI TRIBE ON THE VERY GROUND WE STAND ON...



...BECAUSE OF THIS, THE MOHALI MEDICINE MEN CURSED THE LAND, BEGGING THE EVIL SPIRITS TO BRING DEATH TO ANY WHITE MEN WHO LIVED HERE!



THE EVIL EYE HAS TAKEN THE SHAPE OF THE DEVIL TO MURDER EVERY WHITE ON THIS TERRITORY. I'M LEAVING FORT YORK IN THE MORNING!

ME TOO!



THEY'LL ALL GO - FORT YORK IS FINISHED NOW!

NO, TIMOTHY! NOT IF I CAN PROVE THIS DEVIL IS **MORTAL**! KEEP THEM HERE - AT GUN POINT, IF NEED BE - UNTIL I COME BACK!



PLAINLY MARKED INDIAN TRAIL... BEARING SOUTH. IT MIGHT LEAD TO SOMETHING MORE IMPORTANT THAN RATS IN WARPAINT!

DUK - THE SAME DAY...

FATHER! LOOK! KIT WEST, WHO DEFEATED US LAST YEAR!

AHH, MY SON, THE TRIBAL GODS ARE GOOD TO LOBONDO. SHE MUST BE TAKEN ALIVE!

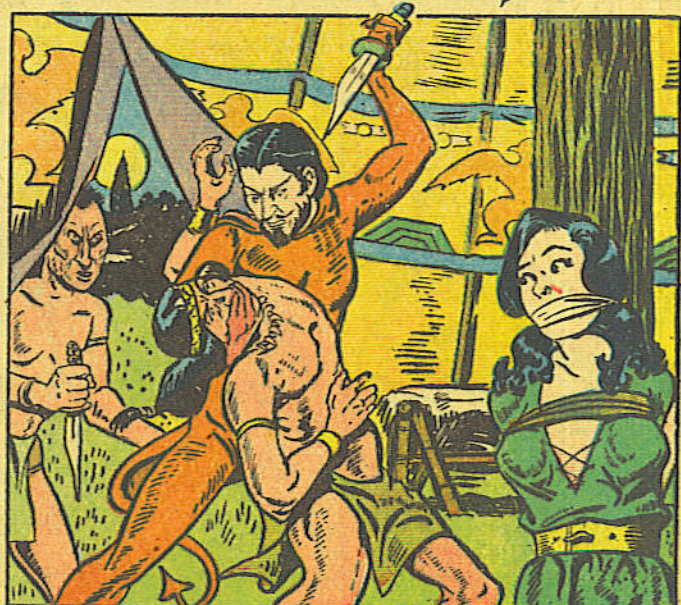


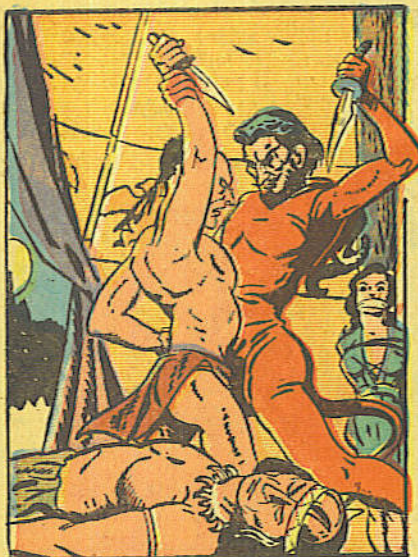
GRISLY DAWN--AT THE TERRIGAN CABIN...

LITTLE JOHNNY DIDN'T LIE! THERE'S THE CHEST HE HID IN - THE BRIMSTONE SMELL - THE RED PALMS OVER THE CORPSES' HEARTS - COULD OLD-TIMER BE RIGHT? IS THE EVIL SPIRIT ON THE WARPATH?









MY SWEET, I'M AFTER A KING'S RANSOM IN JEWELS - BURIED UNDER THE COUNCIL HALL AT FORT YORK! FOR YEARS, I HELPED THE APACHES FIGHT THE SPANISH IN THE SOUTHWEST. ONE DAY, IN A MONASTERY, I FOUND AN ANCIENT MAP DRAWN BY THE SOLDIERS OF DON FORTUNATO HUERTA.

*-ACCORDING TO DON FORTUNATO'S MEN, HUERTA BURIED A FORTUNE IN JEWELS TAKEN FROM MEXICAN TREASURE HOUSES, ON THE PRESENT SITE OF FORT YORK. BUT HE NEVER CAME BACK FOR THEM -- HE DIED OF FEVER WHILE CROSSING THE MISSISSIPPI!!

HUERTA DIED, BUT I STUMBLED UPON HIS FORTUNE! MY TERROR SCHEME WILL MAKE FORT YORK A DESERT... THEN WE WILL DIG UP THE JEWELS AND LIVE IN EUROPE LIKE **ROYALTY!**

YES, DARLING, KISS ME -



MY FATHER ALWAYS DID SAY

THERE WAS A BIT OF THE DEVIL IN ME! SO BYE-BYE, DESERTER... YOU'RE GOING TO COLLECT A PAYMENT THAT'S LONG OVERDUE!

IT'S THE KISS OF DEATH!

NOW TO LEAVE A LOVE LETTER FOR LOBONDO!



ER-LOBONDO - I HEARD SOME FUNNY NOISES IN YOUR SON'S TEPEE... BETTER SEE IF EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT WITH THAT WHITE WITCH!

QUICKLY - THERE MAY BE TROUBLE!



MACHETE HAS BETRAYED US. HE KILLED YOUR SON AND FREED KIT WEST. HE WANTED NOTHING FOR US-ONLY TREASURE FOR HIMSELF!

LET HIM SLEEP. HE WILL AWAKEN AT THE STAKE!



THAT NIGHT

MACHETE'S REIGN OF TERROR IS ENDED. EVEN NOW KIT WEST GIVES HIS SECRET AWAY! ONLY **KNIVES** CAN REMOVE THE WHITES FROM FORT YORK- WE ATTACK AT DAWN!!



AT FORT YORK, THE SAME NIGHT...

SO YOU SEE HOW FOOLISH YOUR FEARS WERE?

YOU SURE HAD US SCARED, KIT! WHO'D DREAM THAT CARLOS MACHETE HATCHED THIS DEVILISH PLOT?



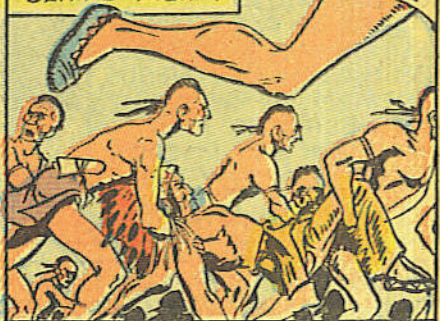
AND NOW-BE PREPARED FOR A MOHALI ATTACK! LOBONDO KNOWS DELAY WILL ONLY BRING REINFORCEMENTS TO FORT YORK!



AT DAWN THE MOHALIS ATTACK



AT NOON, THE MOHALIS RETREATED, DRAGGING THEIR DEAD BEHIND THEM!



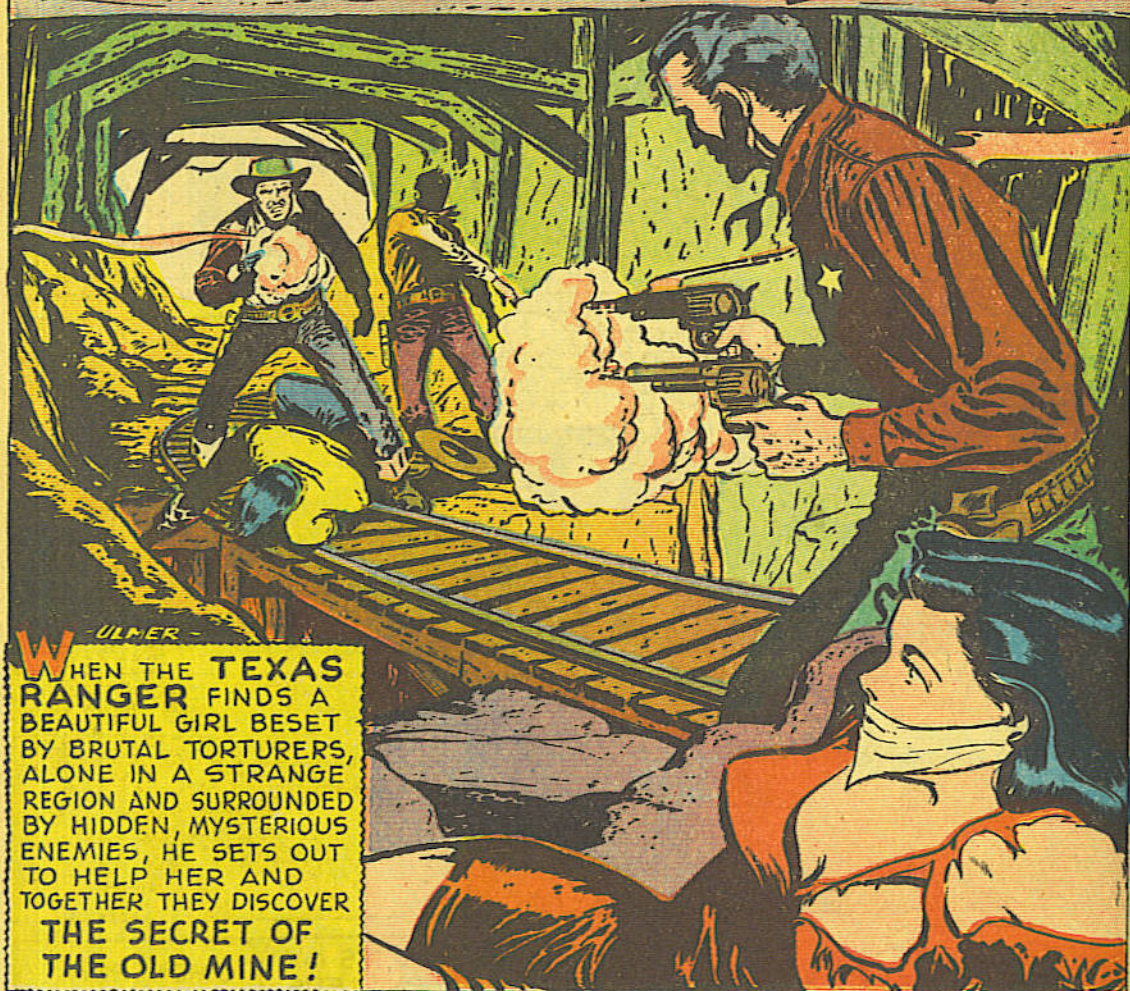
THEY'LL NEVER RECOVER FROM THIS ROUT! NOW LET'S SEE IF THERE ARE ANY JEWELS BURIED UNDER THE COUNCIL HALL!



THE INSCRIPTION ON THE HELMET SAYS THIS IS DON FORTUNATO HIMSELF. HIS OWN MEN MURDERED HIM FOR THE JEWELS. SO THE TREASURE CARLOS WAS AFTER CONSISTS OF NOTHING BUT OLD BONES AND A PUNCTURED SUIT OF IRON. ISN'T THAT **IRONY** FOR YOU!



THE SECRET OF THE OLD MINE



WHEN THE TEXAS RANGER FINDS A BEAUTIFUL GIRL BESET BY BRUTAL TORTURERS, ALONE IN A STRANGE REGION AND SURROUNDED BY HIDDEN, MYSTERIOUS ENEMIES, HE SETS OUT TO HELP HER AND TOGETHER THEY DISCOVER THE SECRET OF THE OLD MINE!

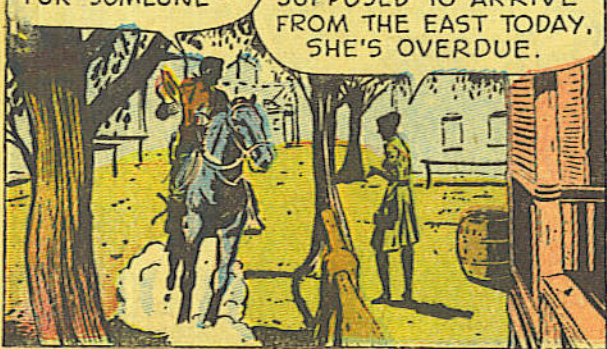
ON TOWN ONE DAY, THE TEXAS RANGER PAUSES AS HE RIDES UP MAIN STREET...

'MORNIN', MRS. BROOKS. WAITING FOR SOMEONE?

WHY, YES, RANGER. MY NEICE JOAN WAS SUPPOSED TO ARRIVE FROM THE EAST TODAY. SHE'S OVERDUE.

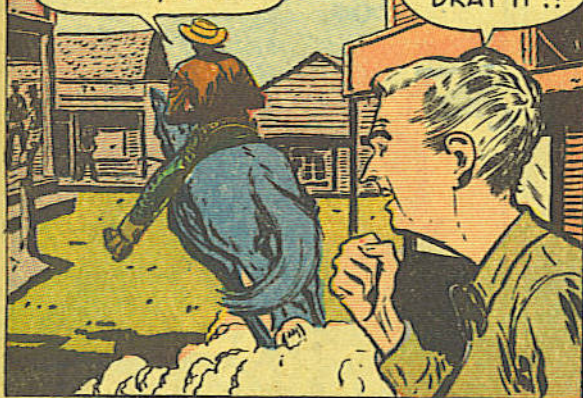
I'LL RIDE OUT AND SEE IF I CAN MEET HER. I WAS A-GOIN' OUT THAT WAY ANYWAY.

OH, NO-- DON'T BOTHER --! I'M SURE SHE'S IN NO DANGER.



NO BOTHER AT ALL, MA'AM.
I'LL HAVE A LOOK FOR HER.
GIDDAP, BOY!

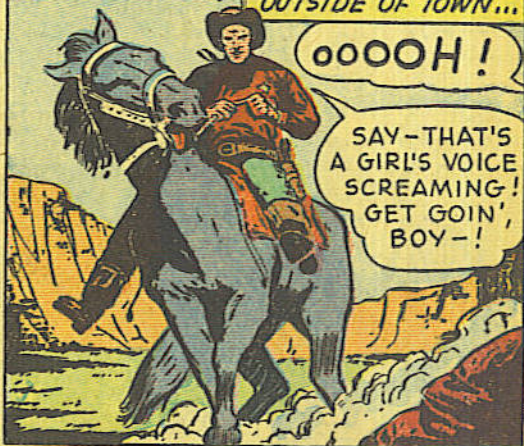
PLEASE ...
DON'T ... OH,
DRAT-IT!!



BUT AS THE RANGER RIDES A PATHWAY
OUTSIDE OF TOWN...

OOOOH!

SAY-THAT'S
A GIRL'S VOICE
SCREAMING!
GET GOIN',
BOY-!

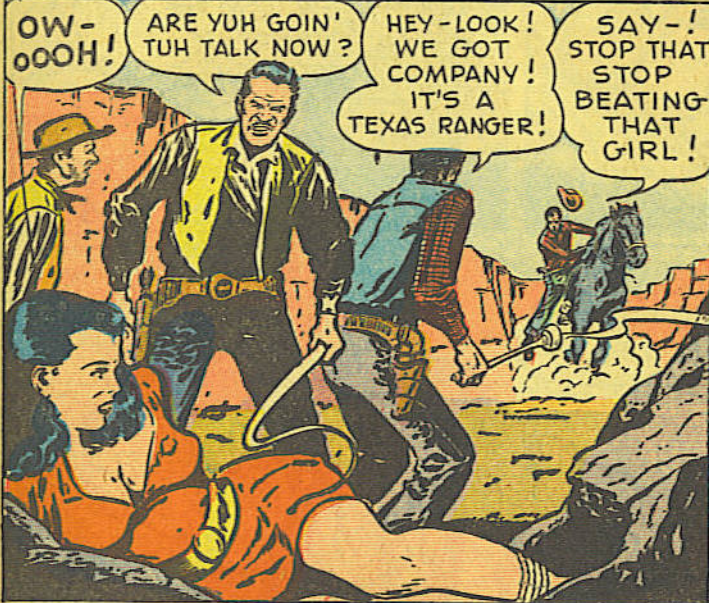


OW-
OOOH!

ARE YUH GOIN'
TUH TALK NOW?

HEY-LOOK!
WE GOT
COMPANY!
IT'S A
TEXAS RANGER!

SAY-!
STOP THAT!
STOP
BEATING
THAT
GIRL!



I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS
HOMBRE!

JUH!



THAT'S EASIER
SAID THAN DONE!

OW-OOO--!

NOW IT'S MY
TURN! LET'S
SEE HOW A
DOSE OF LEAD
APPEALS
TO YOU -

C'MON- RUN
FOR IT!

WE'LL
TAKE CARE
O' HIM
SOME OTHER
TIME!



TOO BAD THEY'VE
GOTTEN AWAY. AND
NOW FOR YOU, YOUNG
LADY, I'LL HAVE YOU
UNTIED IN A SECOND.
WHAT IS THIS ALL
ABOUT?

I'M SO GLAD YOU
CAME--I THOUGHT
I'D NEVER BE
SAVED. THEY
MUST'VE BEEN AFTER
THE SECRET OF THE
OLD COLBY MINE.



DO YOU MEAN THE OLD DESERTED
COLBY MINE THAT TED BROOKS
OWNED? THAT MINE'S
NO GOOD.

MAYBE! MY NAME
IS JOAN BROOKS. WHEN
MY UNCLE, TED BROOKS,
DIED RECENTLY, HE
SENT ME A STRANGE
MESSAGE.



HE SAID THERE WAS A HIDDEN VEIN
OF GOLD IN THAT MINE AND THEN HE
DREW A PICTURE OF A TOP HAT AND
A SHOVEL. I THINK IT'S SOME SORT OF
CLUE AND I
MUST FIGURE
IT OUT.

HMMM... HE MUST'VE
SEEN SOME KIND OF
DANGER TO SEND YOU
SUCH A CRYPTIC
MESSAGE.



YES, UNCLE TED
MUST HAVE, PERHAPS
YOU CAN HELP ME
UNRAVEL THE
SECRET, I... I HAVE
FEW FRIENDS
OUT HERE.

OF COURSE I'LL
HELP YOU, JOAN.
YOU'RE IN DANGER
HERE. NOW LET'S
GET BACK. YOUR
AUNT WAS WAITING
FOR YOU WHEN I
LEFT TOWN. I'LL
TAKE YOU OUT TO
THE BROOKS RANCH.



AND SO, SOON AFTER...

YOU POOR DEAR. WHAT
A HORRIBLE EXPERIENCE,
HOWEVER, YOU'LL HAVE
TO STAY HERE A DAY
OR TWO TILL I CAN
FIND SOME SUITABLE
CLOTHES FOR YOU
IN TOWN.

YES, THIS
OUTFIT OF
MINE IS
QUITE TORN
BUT I CAN'T
STAY INDOORS.
IT'S IMPORTANT
THAT I GO TO
THE MINE
AT ONCE!



WILL YOU
SHOW ME
WHERE THE
OLD COLBY
MINE IS?

WHY, SURE.
WE CAN USE
MY HORSE.

I CAN SEE
THAT **THAT**
GIRL'S GOING
TO BE
TROUBLESOME!

LATER, INSIDE THE OLD
DESERTED MINE...

GOSH--IT'S
SPOOKY IN HERE.
WE MUST FIND
SOMETHING
HERE--THAT
WOULD CONNECT
WITH THAT
STRANGE
MESSAGE.

A TOP
HAT AND A
SHOVEL IS
CERTAINLY A
STRANGE
COMBINATION.

WE'D
BETTER USE
THIS WOODEN
PLATFORM
HERE, TILL
WE GET
OVER THAT
SLIME. THIS
PLACE IS
SURE
RUN-DOWN.

RIGHT.
IT HASN'T
BEEN
WORKED
FOR YEARS
--NOT EVEN
WHEN MY
UNCLE WAS
LIVING--.

SUDDENLY...

LOOK
OUT!!

I WONDER
IF--
YEE-OOW!

CRA-A-K!

HELP!
I'M SINKING!
THIS SLIME,
--IT'S LIKE
QUICKSAND!

DON'T MOVE.
YOU'LL SINK
QUICKER!
I'LL GET
YOU OUT!



CATCH HOLD
OF MY
LASSO...

ALL RIGHT
-- I
HAVE IT!



HOLD TIGHT...
HERE YOU GO!

WHEW!
I'M GLAD I GOT
OUT OF THAT!
I GUESS WE
SHOULDN'T HAVE
TRUSTED THIS
OLD WOODEN
PLANKING.

LOOK HERE! THE EDGE
OF THIS PLANKING HAS
BEEN SAWED TO
MAKE IT GIVE WAY!

I THINK SOMEONE
WEAKENED IT TO
TRAP YOU, SHOULD
YOU COME HERE.

APPARENTLY,
WHOEVER'S
BEHIND THIS
SUSPECTS THAT
THE MINE
ISN'T USELESS.

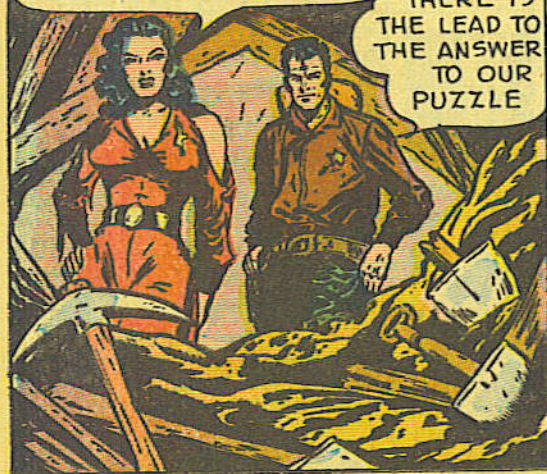


AND THAT MESSAGE-LOOK!
THIS PLACE IS FILLED WITH
OLD SHOVELS AND TOOLS.

YES -
PERHAPS
THERE IS
THE LEAD TO
THE ANSWER
TO OUR
PUZZLE

I'D BETTER GET YOU
BACK TO YOUR
AUNT'S PLACE. NOTHING
MUCH MORE WE CAN
DO TODAY. YOU BETTER
GET A CHANGE
OF CLOTHES.

PERHAPS WE'D BEST
RETURN TOMORROW,
AFTER I'VE HAD
SOME REST, TOO.



WHEN JOAN AND THE RANGER REACH THE RANCH...

THANK HEAVENS YOU'RE BACK. I MUST INSIST THAT YOU STAY HERE TILL I'VE HAD TIME TO GET YOU SOME CLOTHES AND YOU'VE HAD A GOOD REST.

BUT, AUNT - !

I'M SORRY, BUT THIS MEANS SO MUCH TO ME. I JUST CAN'T STAY IN THE HOUSE FOR DAYS, I'LL LOOK IN THE ATTIC. MAYBE I CAN FIND SOME OLD CLOTHES THERE.

MAY I HELP YOU?

IF YOU WISH, BUT YOU WON'T FIND ANYTHING. YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO STAY INDOORS TILL I GO INTO TOWN TOMORROW

AND IN THE ATTIC ...

I GIVE UP - THERE'S NOT A SUITABLE THING TO WEAR HERE.

YOU CAN'T WEAR THIS, BUT LOOK WHAT I'VE FOUND...

THIS **SHOVEL** ! THERE'S ENGRAVING ON THE HANDLE - IT SAYS THIS IS THE FIRST SHOVEL YOUR UNCLE EVER USED.

SHOVEL--! THAT MESSAGE--IT MUST'VE REFERRED TO **THIS SHOVEL** ! **QUICK--** LOOK THROUGH THE REST OF THE TRUNK.

LOOK HERE -- IT'S HALF OF A MAP-- A MAP OF THE MINE !

AND HERE'S A TOP HAT -- JUST LIKE THAT MESSAGE HAD. NOW HOW DOES THIS TOP HAT FIT HERE? LOOK THROUGH THE LINING.

LOOK ! HERE IS THE OTHER HALF OF THAT MAP

AND LOOK--THERE'S A MARK AT A CERTAIN SPOT. LET'S GET DOWN TO THE MINE RIGHTAWAY !

RACING TO THE OLD MINE, THEY FOLLOW THE MAP AND FIND ...

HERE IT IS -- THE SPOT MARKED ON THE MAP.

AND LOOK -- THIS HANDLE JUTTING FROM THE ROCK. STEP BACK AND I'LL GIVE IT A PULL.



HERE GOES -- ! SEE THAT ROCK -- IT'S OPENING !!

IT'S A TUNNEL -- A HIDDEN TUNNEL! IT MUST BE THE UNTAPPED VEIN OF GOLD THAT NO ONE BUT UNCLE KNEW OF!



BUT SUDDENLY ...

YES -- AND THANK YOU FOR UNCOVERING IT FOR US! GO GET THEM, BOYS!

WHA?? WHY, AUNT, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

WE HAVE COMPANY. IT'S YOUR THREE FRIENDS WHO TRIED TO TORTURE YOU.



THIS TIME I'LL FINISH WHAT I STARTED ON THAT ROAD.

DON'T MAKE US LAUGH! ALL RIGHT, -- GRAB HIM!



AN OLD SHOVEL LYING AROUND CAN COME IN MIGHTY HANDY -- !





AND SO, LATER, BACK IN TOWN, AFTER THE NEW TENANTS HAVE BEEN DEPOSITED IN THE TOWN JAIL ...



TRAIL TALES

by an
OLD RANNY



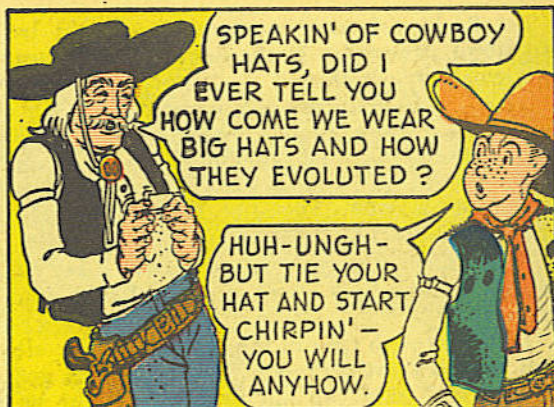
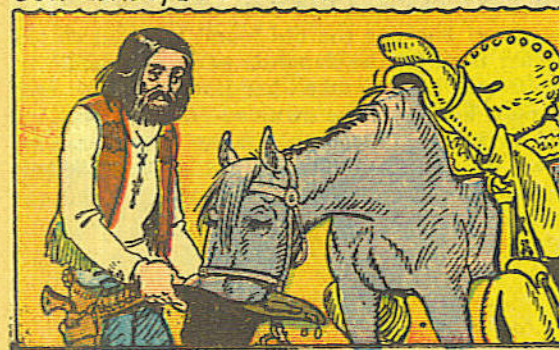
WELL, YOU SEE IT T'WER LIKE THIS — WHEN WE FIRST CAME OUT WEST HERE, WE WORE STOVE PIPE AND LOW CROWN'D WIDE BRIM HATS MADE OF BEAVER FUR



ONE DAY 'BOUT THAT TIME, A PILGRIM GOT OFF TH' STAGE — A HAT MAKER, HE WAS —



YOU SEE, WE HAD TO USE OUR HATS FER OTHER THINGS BESIDES WEARIN' 'EM ON OUR HEADS, LIKE WATERIN' OUR HORSES —



BUT THEY WURN'T PRACTIAL FOR THIS PART OF TH' COUNTRY — THEY JUS' SEEMED TO WILT, FLOP, AND GIVE AWAY IN GENERAL —



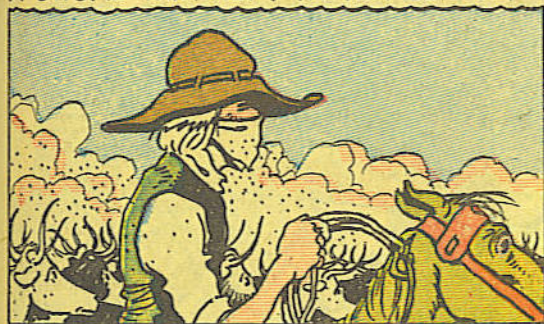
HE SAW RIGHT AWAY WE WUZ NEEDIN' TH' RIGHT KIND OF A HAT FER THIS KIND OF COUNTRY —



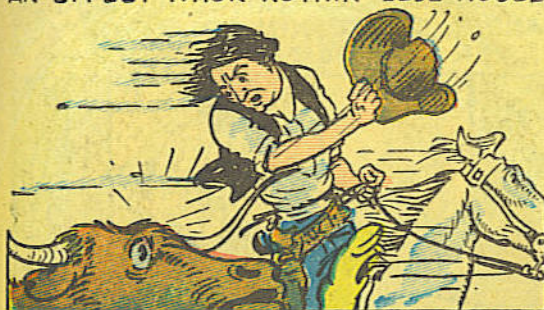
— WASHIN' OUR FACES, AND THEM OLD BEAVER FUR HATS KINDA SOAKED UP TH' WATER AND LEAKED — —



THEN THUR WUS TH' ELEMENTS WE
HAD TO PUT UP WITH, IN TH' SUMMER
A BROAD RIM KEPT TH' HOT SUN OFF-



THEY WUR RIGHT HANDY IN DRIVIN'
COW-CRITTERS - A WHACK OVER A
CRITTER'S NOSE WOULD OFTEN HAVE
AN EFFECT WHUR NOTHIN' ELSE WOULD



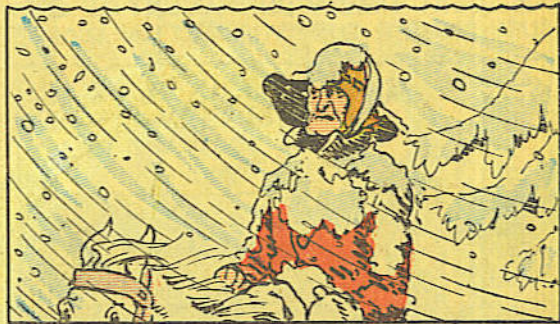
AS I WUZ SAYIN', THAT HAT MAKER,
STETSON WUZ HIS HANDLE, EF I RECOLLECT
RIGHT, DONE SEEN WHAT FER WE USED
OUR HATS AND OUR CRYIN' NEED FER
A HAT WHUT COULD TAKE IT - PERTY
SOON HE SHIPS US A NEW KINDA HAT-



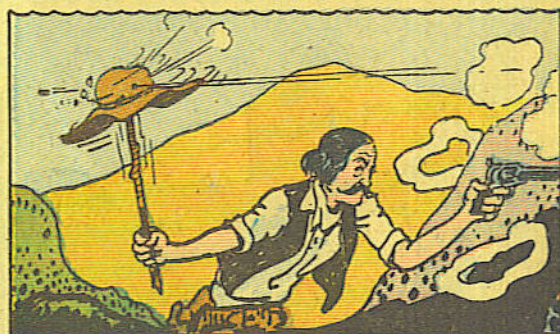
I DON'T KNOW WHY WE CALLED IT TH'
HORSEMAN'S HAT, BUT ANYWAY IT WUS
A START, AND THAT FELLER STETSON
TRIED AGAIN. THIS TIME HE SENT OUT
A WIDE RIM, LOW CROWN HAT, STILL
TH' RIM WUS LIKE A BOARD!



AND IN TH' WINTER, WE TIED TH'
BRIM DOWN OVER OUR EARS WITH
OUR HANDKERCHIEF -



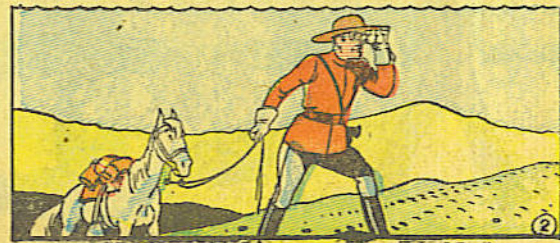
THEN AGAIN THESE BIG HATS COME IN
RIGHT HANDY WHEN LEAD SLINGIN'
GOT TO BE TH' BUSINESS OF TH' DAY -



- BUT HE DIDN'T GIT TH' IDEA AT ALL.
THIS NEW HAT WUS JES' NO HAT FER A
HARD WORKIN' COWBOY - IT HAD A LOW
CROWN AND A NARROW RIM THET WUZ
AS STIFF AS A BOARD - NOBODY BUT
TH' TOWN FELLERS WOULD WEAR ONE.
WE NAMED IT "TH' HORSEMAN'S HAT"



A FEW OF US COWBOYS TRIED 'EM BÜT
THEY WURN'T WHAT WE WANTED
THO I DO UNDERSTAND TH' BOYS UP
NORTH LIKED 'EM. SO, WE CALLED
THEM TH' NORTHWEST "MOUNTIE"
ON ACCOUNT THE CANADIAN MOUNTED
POLICE WORE 'EM.



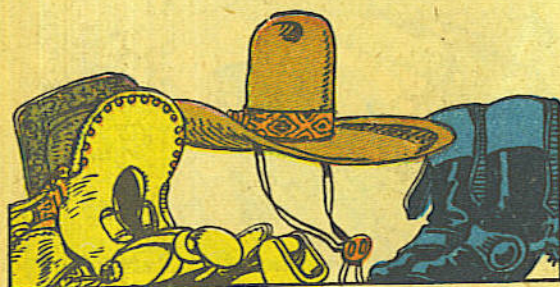
FIANLLY, MR. STETSON INVENTED A NEW MATERIAL FER MAKIN' HATS. INSTEAD OF USIN' BEAVER FUR, HE USED A FELT. THIS WUS RIGHT TIMELY ON ACCOUNT OF BE- CAUSE BEAVER FUR WUS GETTIN' SCARCE

THIS NEW FELT MADE JUST TH' KINDA HAT WE WUS NEEDIN'. IT WUS A HIGH CROWND, WIDE ROLLED RIM. USAGE AN' WEATHER TOOK A LONG TIME GITTIN' THUR WORK IN ON THESE HATS.



THUR WUS ONLY ONE FAULT WITH 'EM. THEY WUS MIGHTY EXPENSIVE FER A COWBOY TO BUY, BUT LIKE HIS BOOTS AND SADDLE, ONLY TH' BEST WOULD DO.

-- A COWBOY BEIN' KIND OF AN INDIVIDUALIST AND CRAFTSMAN, WANTS HIS OWN BRAND OF A HAT BAND -- SAY LIKE A HAND-PLATED HORSEHAIR BAND, A SNAKESKIN OR A FANCY SILVER CONCHAS -- 'N' CETRY --

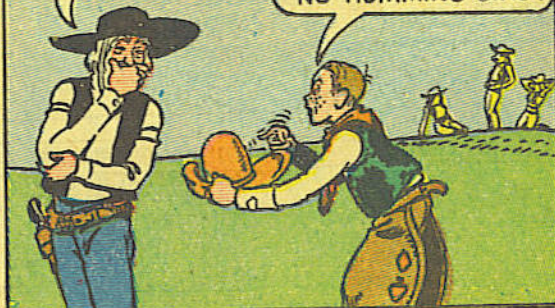


COURSE, ONE CAN BUY A CHEAP HAT OF SOME SUBSTITUTE KINDA FELT, SAME WHICH GOES TO PIECES POCO TIMEO. MOST DUDES AN' KIDS BUY 'EM.



THESE HATS'R CALLED -- HUMMIN' BIRDS!

BETCHA PLENTY DINERO, THIS GOOD OLD HAT O' MINE'S NO HUMMING BIRD!



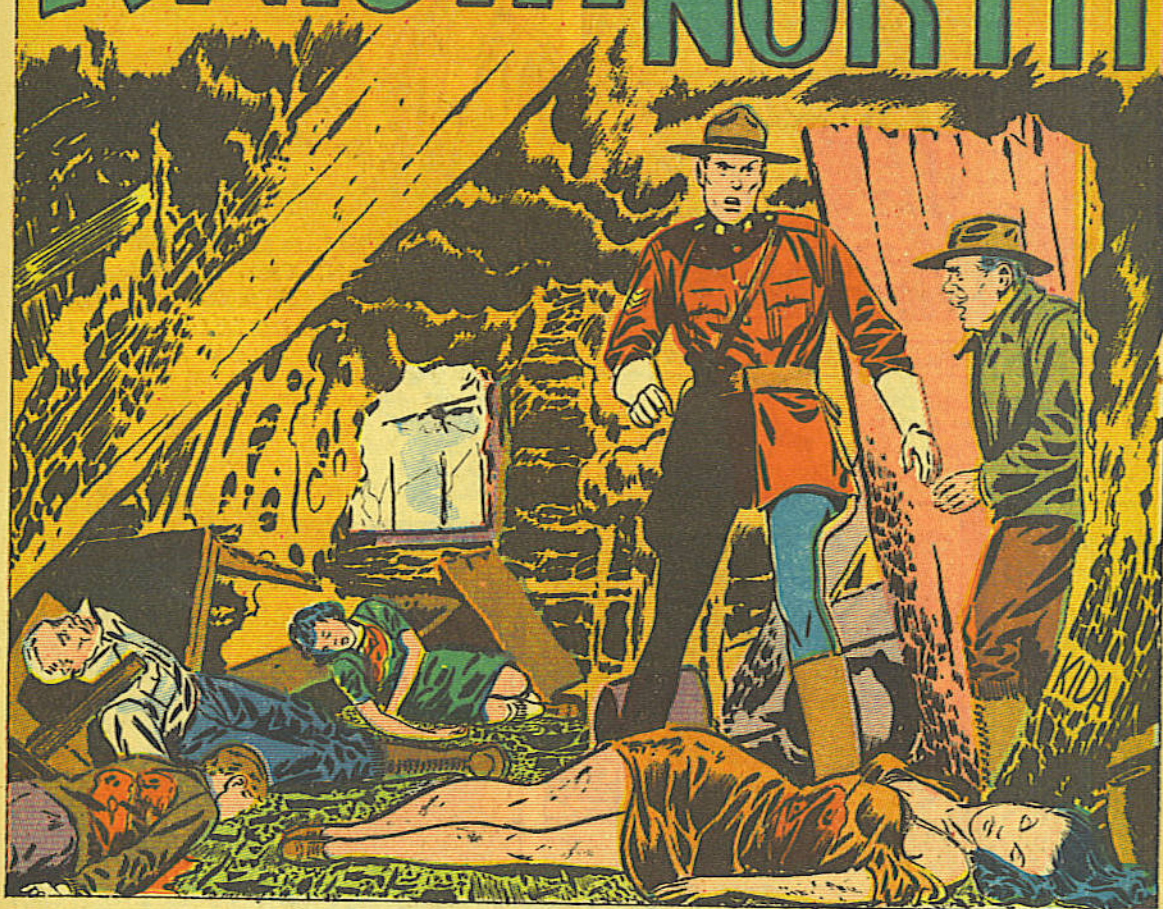
NAW--'STOO EXPENSIVE LOOKIN'



HMM-M- I WONDER IF HE'S KIDDING ME, MAYBE MY HAT IS A - A HUMMING BIRD!



KNIGHT of the NORTH



NOTHING UNUSUAL EVER HAPPENED IN THE TINY SASKATCHEWAN TOWN OF MILLGLOW--- THEN, ONE DAY, LIKE A LIGHTNING BOLT, MURDER STRUCK A SAVAGE BLOW AT THE BEWILDERED HAMLET! --AND NOT ONE MURDER, BUT SIX!! SERGEANT KEN KNIGHT FOUND NOT A SINGLE CLUE! NOT A SHRED OF EVIDENCE POINTING TOWARD A KILLER! WHO COULD HAVE BEEN THE "MURDERER UNKNOWN" ??????

IT'S UNBELIEVABLE! FIVE PEOPLE, ALL RELATED, SHOT TO DEATH-- AND THEN BURNED IN THEIR HOUSE-- HOW GHASTLY!

THAT ISN'T ALL, KEN! THERE'S ANOTHER CORPSE HERE IN THE CELLAR!



MRS. LUBART! SHE MUST'VE BEEN TRYING TO HIDE WHEN THE MURDERER SHOT HER AFTER SHE GOT DOWN THE LADDER!

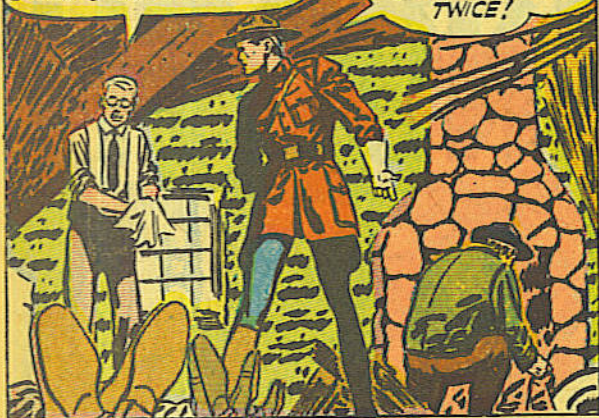
THAT MAKES SIX DEAD-- NOT COUNTING THE COWS THE MANIAC KILLED-- OVER IN THE BARN!



AN HOUR LATER--

EACH HAS BEEN SHOT TWICE WITH A RIFLE--WINCHESTER! THE BULLETS DON'T LIE!

WE'RE MATCHING WITS WITH A MANIAC! EVEN THE COWS IN THE BARN WERE SHOT TWICE!



NOTHING, KEN! NOT A CLUE! THE GUY MIGHT'VE BEEN A MANIAC, BUT HE WAS AS SMART AS A JUDGE!

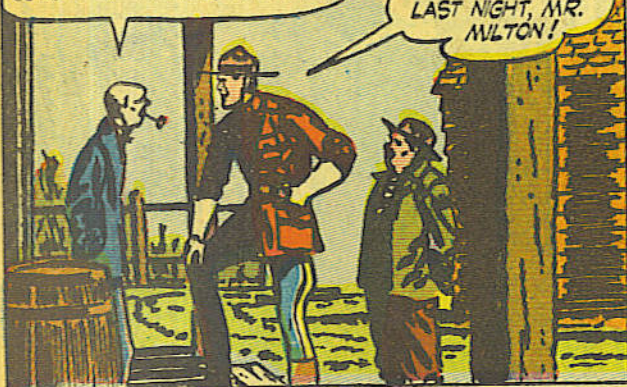
WELL, LET'S SEE SOME OF THE FAMILY'S FRIENDS, AND TRY TO PIECE TOGETHER WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT!



IN THE TOWN OF MILLGLOW, SHORTLY AFTER

SURE, I WAS THE LAST ONE TO SEE JOE TIGHE ALIVE--AND THE LUBARTS TOO! TIGHE WAS A COUSIN OF THEIRS, YOU KNOW!

TELL US AS MUCH AS YOU KNOW OF THE DEAD PEOPLE'S WHEREABOUTS LAST NIGHT, MR. MILTON!



YESTERDAY WAS MEETIN' DAY. THE LUBARTS WERE THERE, AND SO WAS JOE TIGHE! WE FINISHED EARLY, AND THE LUBARTS WENT HOME! JOE, AND A COUPLE OF THE BOYS, INCLUDIN' ME, DIDN'T WANT TO GO SO SOON, SO WE WENT TO MY HOUSE, AND PLAYED CARDS!



"...WE PLAYED ABOUT TWO HOURS, AND THEN JOE AND THE OTHER BOYS GOT UP!"

TIME WE WERE GOIN' HOME! YOU COMIN' MIKE?

YEAH, SAM AND ME--WE GO YOUR WAY FOR A SPELL! 'NIGHT, MR. MILTON!

'NIGHT! SEE YOU TOMORROW!



"...A MILE FROM MY PLACE, THE THREE BROKE UP...POOR JOE--DIDN'T KNOW WHAT HE WAS COMING HOME TO, DID HE?"

SO LONG, MIKE. SEE YOU IN THE MORNIN'!

'NIGHT, BOYS!

NOT IF I SEE YOU FIRST!



--THAT'S ALL I KNOW OF THE CASE, SERGEANT-- THAT THE LUBARTS WENT HOME EARLY, AND JOE TIGHE LEFT MY PLACE AT ELEVEN TO GET HIMSELF KILLED WITH THEM!



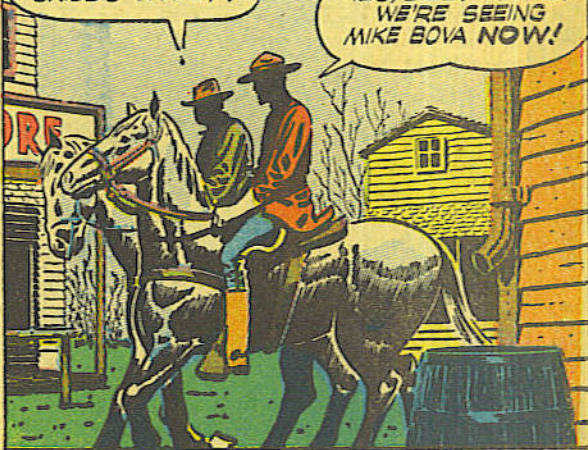
THIS BOVA--
WASN'T HE A
RELATION
BY MARRIAGE
TO THE
LUBARTS AND
TIGHE?

YEAH-- MIKE WAS THAT!
HE MARRIED CLARA LUBART,
THE DAUGHTER! PRETTY GIRL!
BUT THEY HAD FIGHTS, AND
LAST YEAR CLARA LEFT
MIKE, AND WENT HOME
TO LIVE WITH HER FATHER---



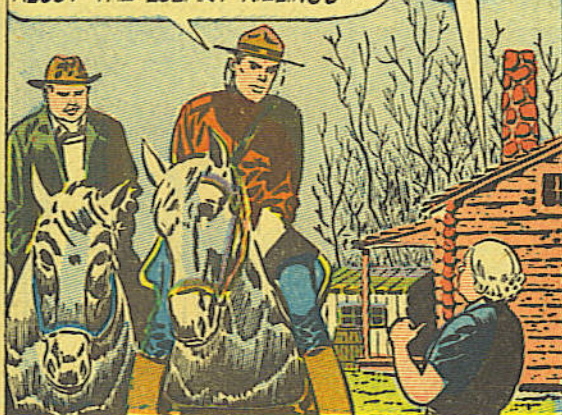
YOU'RE THINKING WHAT I'M THINKING, AREN'T YOU,
KEN?--THAT MIKE BOVA HAD A MOTIVE FOR
GETTING EVEN WITH HIS
BRIDE'S FAMILY?

YES, BILL! IN FACT--
WE'RE SEEING
MIKE BOVA NOW!



LOOKIN' FOR MIKE? I'M MIKE'S MA! MIKE'S
IN THE BACK
BARN,
THERE!

THANKS, MRS. BOVA, WE'VE GOT A
COUPLE OF QUESTIONS TO ASK MIKE
ABOUT THE LUBART KILLINGS---



BELIEVE ME, OFFICER! MIKE HAD NOTHIN' TO DO
WITH IT! LAST NIGHT HE CAME HOME A LITTLE
AFTER ELEVEN! HE ATE SOMETHIN' AN' THEN
WENT TO SLEEP! MIKE'S
A GOOD BOY!

DON'T UPSET YOURSELF,
MRS. BOVA, IF MIKE'S
INNOCENT, HE'S GOT
NOTHING TO FEAR!



MOUNTIES?!! ABOUT THE LUBARTS,
EH? YOU THINK I HAD SOMETHIN'
TO DO WITH IT
'CAUSE I
THREATENED
TO KILL
THEM?

YOU DID THREATEN
TO KILL THEM---?
SUPPOSE YOU TELL
US ABOUT THAT, MIKE!
IT INTERESTS ME
POWERFULLY!



I MARRIED
CLARA LUBART
ABOUT TWO
YEARS AGO--
SHE LEFT ME
LAST YEAR--
EVERYTHING
WAS QUARRELS!
I STILL LIKED
HER, BUT THE
OLD MAN MADE
ME STAY AWAY
FROM HER!



"--A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO I MADE UP MY
MIND TO TAKE CLARA BACK--"

I'M HER HUSBAND, AND I SAY SHE'S COMING
BACK WITH ME!
NOBODY'S STOPPING
ME, EITHER!

IF YOU DON'T GET OUT
OF MY HOUSE,
MIKE BOVA--!



SO HELP ME GOD I'LL BLOW THE HEART OUT OF YOU! NOW GET OUT OF HERE, AND DON'T COME BACK!

SO IT'S GUNS YOU WANT TO PLAY WITH, EH? ALL RIGHT! LOOK OUT FOR ME, LUBART --- LOOK OUT!



I WASN'T ON THE OUTS WITH JOE! JOE WAS A NICE GUY. WHEN I GOT HOME LAST NIGHT, AFTER LEAVIN' JOE ON THE ROAD, I ATE AND WENT TO SLEEP. THAT'S ALL I DID LAST NIGHT... SLEEP! THAT'S ALL! WANT TO ARREST ME FOR SLEEPIN'?



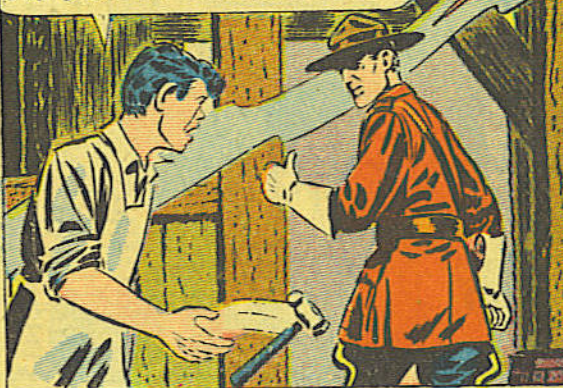
SURE--I THREATENED THEM! BUT I HAD NOTHIN' TO DO WITH KILLIN' THEM! I AIN'T BEEN NEAR THEIR FARM FOR NEARLY A YEAR!

THEN, HOW COME YOU SIT DOWN AND PLAY CARDS WITH JOE TIGHE, LUBARTS' COUSIN, IF YOU'RE ON THE OUTS WITH THE WHOLE FAMILY?



NOT UNLESS YOU WALKED IN YOUR SLEEP WITH A WINCHESTER! COME ON OUTSIDE, MIKE, AND SHOW US THE CLOTHES YOU WORE LAST NIGHT.

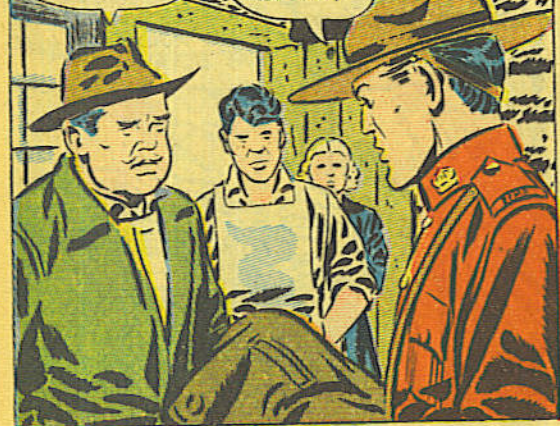
SO YOU THINK I'VE BEEN BULLING YOU? SURE, I'LL SHOW 'EM TO YOU... COME ON!



INSIDE THE HOUSE--

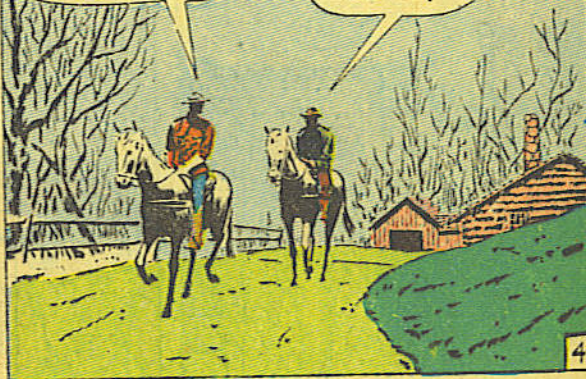
WELL, KEN?

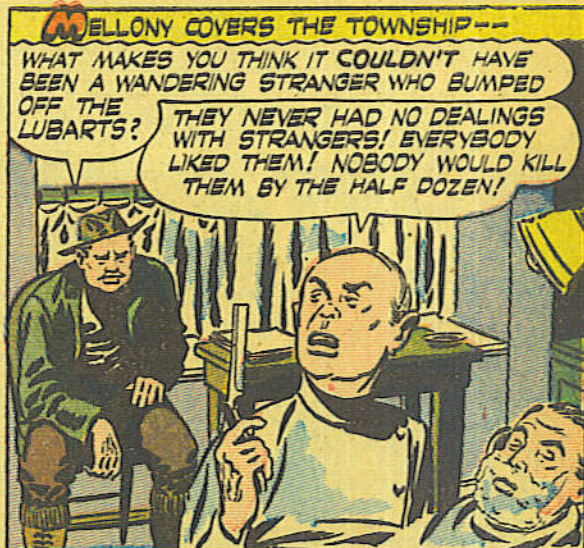
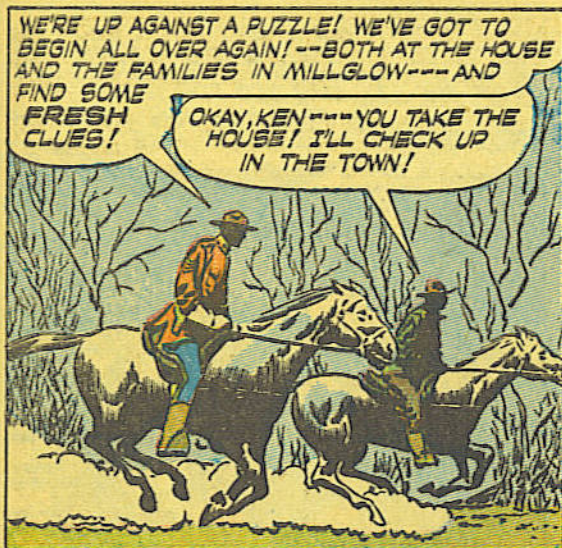
MIKE'S NOT ACTING! THESE CLOTHES DON'T SHOW A SIGN OF SMOKE, FIRE OR BLOOD!



WE CAN'T SUSPECT BOVA, BILL! IT'S PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO HAVE TRAILED JOE TIGHE, SHOT HIM, THEN SHOT ALL OF THE LUBARTS AND THE COWS, FIRED THE HOUSES, AND THEN COME BACK HERE-- ALL IN A HALF HOUR!

THEN WHO DID IT?

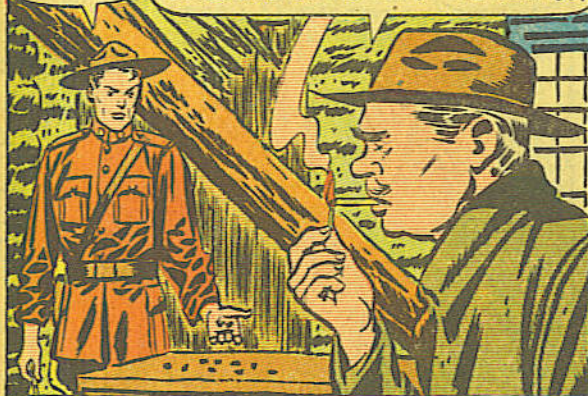




IN FACT, I'M BEGINNING TO GET BURNED UP, MYSELF-- I'M SO MYSTIFIED IT ISN'T FUNNY! WHAT DID YOU FIND OUT?

YOU FIND OUT?

NOTHING TO AMUSE YOU, EXCEPT THAT IF JOE TIGHE WASN'T DEAD-- I'D BE SUSPECTING HIM OF THE KILLINGS!



YOU SEE, JOE WAS NUTS ABOUT CLARA FROM THE TIME SHE MARRIED MIKE BOVA, BUT THE LUBARTS DIDN'T LIKE JOE FOR THEIR DAUGHTER ANY MORE'N THEY LIKED MIKE!

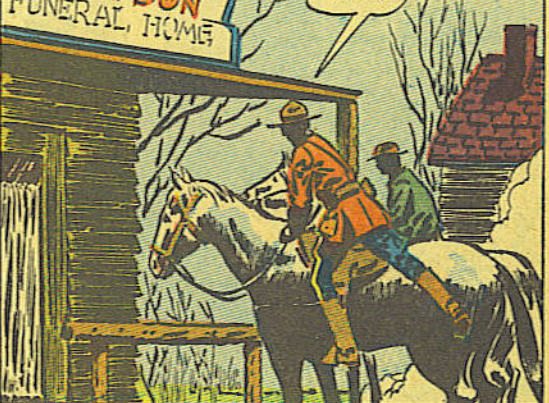


I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, KEN, BUT WHEN I SEE A GUY DEAD, WITH TWO BULLETS IN HIM, THAT GUY IS PERFECTLY ALIBED!

MAYBE YES --- MAYBE NO! WE'RE DIGGING UP THE CORONER!

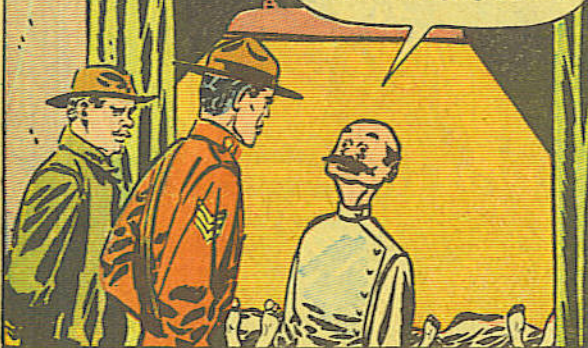


A HALF HOUR LATER-- IF MY HUNCH IS RIGHT, WE'LL HAVE THE MURDERER JUST WHERE WE WANT HIM!



HELLO, DOCTOR...I SEE YOU'VE GOT A FULL HOUSE! BY ANY CHANCE, IS JOE TIGHE ONE OF THE SLAP PARTIES?

WHY YES! HE'S THE ONE ON THE EXTREME LEFT... A BULLET WOUND IN HIS HEAD, AND ONE IN THE CHEST-- BOTH CAUSING INSTANTANEOUS DEATH!

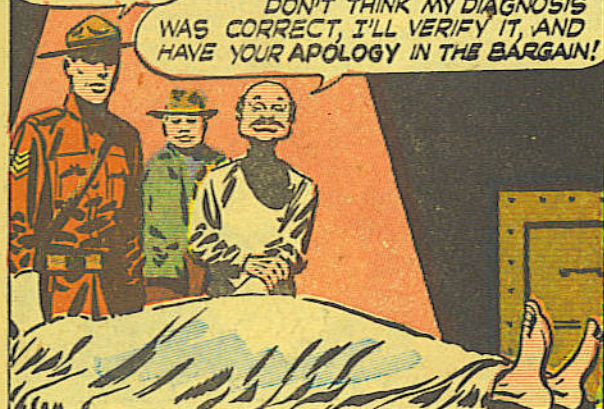


STRAIGHTEN OUT A POINT FOR ME, DOCTOR--IF THE CHEST WOUND CAUSED INSTANTANEOUS DEATH, THE CHEST CAVITY WOULD NOT BE SWIMMING WITH BLOOD, RIGHT?



THAT REMAINS TO BE SEEN, DOCTOR! I WANT AN AUTOPSY DONE ON TIGHE'S BODY IMMEDIATELY! I MUST KNOW WHETHER OR NOT, TIGHE COMMITTED SUICIDE!

VERY WELL, KNIGHT! IF YOU DON'T THINK MY DIAGNOSIS WAS CORRECT, I'LL VERIFY IT, AND HAVE YOUR APOLOGY IN THE BARGAIN!



TIME PASSES, AND THEN--

THAT'S ODD! I COULD HAVE SWORN!

WHAT'S UP DOCTOR? FIND SOMETHING?



KNIGHT, I WAS WRONG! TIGHE DIDN'T DIE FROM THE CHEST WOUND. HE ONLY SUFFERED AN INTERNAL HEMORRHAGE! THE HEAD WOUND

EXCELLENT! NOW GIVE ME A SPONGE TO CLEAN THE WOUND ON TIGHE'S HEAD!

KILLED HIM!



THERE! UNDER THE GRIME I WIPED AWAY, YOU CAN SEE THE POWDER MARKS OF THE SUICIDE SHOT TIGHE SENT INTO HIS OWN HEAD!



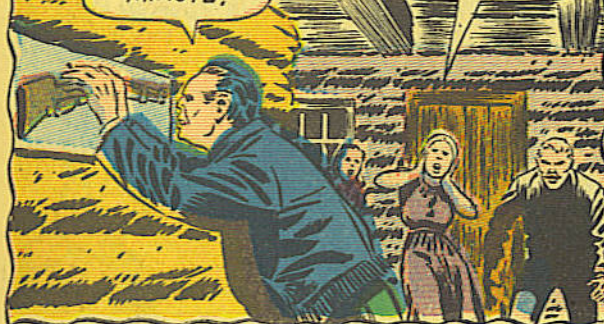
TIGHE IS OUR MURDERER! IT WAS HE WHO WIPED OUT THE LUBART FAMILY, AND THEN KILLED HIMSELF--AND I'LL TELL YOU HOW AND WHY!



"--WHEN TIGHE RETURNED TO THE LUBARTS AFTER THE CARD GAME, SOMEHOW HE BROUGHT UP THE MATTER OF MARRYING CLARA, THE DAUGHTER. WHEN HE WAS TURNED DOWN AGAIN, HE MUST'VE GONE BERSERK!"

SO, I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR HER!? I'LL SHOW YOU! YOU'LL ALL BE GOOD FOR NOTHING IN A MINUTE!

JOE! N-NO!!!

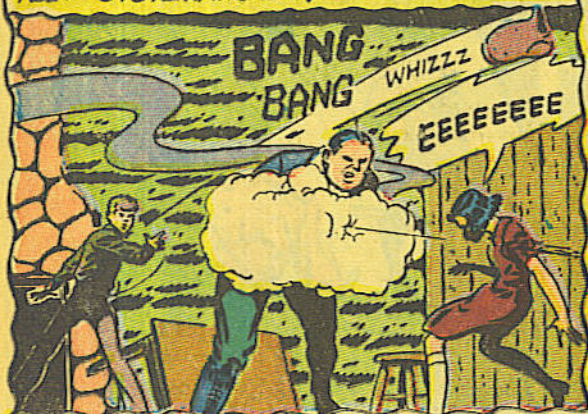


ALL OF YOU! NOT ONE WILL I LEAVE ALIVE!

OH-H-H-H



"I KNEW THE WINCHESTER BELONGED TO LUBART BECAUSE IT WAS MISSING FROM ITS HOOKS ON THE WALL. THE ONE PERSON WHO HATED THE LUBARTS USED IT TO KILL THEM ALL-- SYSTEMATICALLY!"



YOU'RE NEXT, CLARA! YOU'RE NEXT! MAYBE YOU'LL LIKE THIS BETTER THAN MARRIAGE!
HA-HA!!



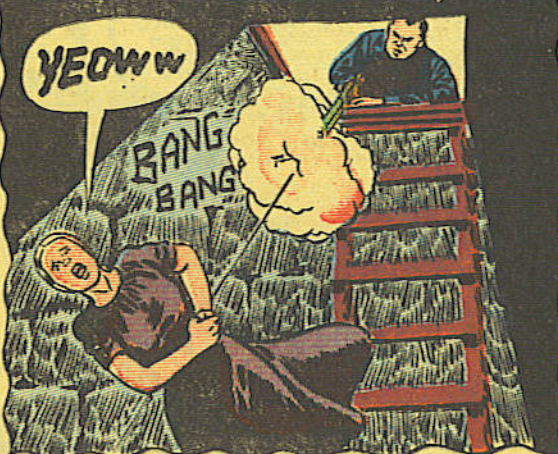
DIE, CLARA, DIE!!

OHHHHH--

BANG
BANG



YOU'RE THE LAST, BUT NOT THE LEAST, MARGARET! YOU CANNOT ESCAPE! SEE?



"--AFTER KILLING EVERYONE, TIGHE SLAUGHTERED THE CATTLE, AND SET FIRE TO THE BARN AND HOUSE.. THEN HE TRIED TO KILL HIMSELF-- UNSUCCESSFULLY!"

I MISSED MY HEART! I'M DYING, BUT NOT FAST ENOUGH!
--THE FLAMES WILL DEVOUR ME ALIVE!



"--FEELING THE HEAT AROUND HIM, AND KNOWING HE'D SOON BE IN THE FLAMES HIMSELF, TIGHE LEANED THE RIFLE AGAINST HIS HEAD, AND PULLED THE TRIGGER!"

I'LL SEE THAT THEY DON'T!



WHEW! THAT'S AS CLEAR AS CRYSTAL NOW! OF COURSE TIGHE DID IT! HOW'D YOU HAPPEN TO HIT ON THE SOLUTION, KEN?

I'VE GOT A PRETTY GOOD INCENTIVE, BILL. IT WOULDN'T LOOK GOOD TO HAVE SIX UNSOLVED MURDERS ON THE FORCE'S BOOKS-- WOULD IT?

